

whereby a loosened bed of soil can be defined for receipt of at least one of seed and fertilizer.

~~Please cancel claim 3.~~

Please amend claim 4 as follows:

4. (amended) The apparatus for preparing soil according to claim [3] 2 wherein the coulter comprises a wheel and the wheel is one of a wave and a ripple construction.

[Please amend claim 5 as follows:]

5. (amended) The apparatus for preparing soil according to claim [1] 4 wherein the first means comprises a first wheel having a rotational axis and the second means comprises a second wheel with there being third means mounting the second wheel to the frame for rotation about [a horizontally extending] an axis that is non-parallel to a vertical plane containing the rotational axis of the first wheel.

[Please amend claim 6 as follows:]

6. (amended) The apparatus for preparing soil according to claim 1 wherein the second means comprises a second wheel with there being means mounting the second wheel to the frame so that the second wheel traces a path in rotation bounded by a plane that [coincides with] intersects the first means [in the line of the travel direction for the frame].

Please amend claim 8 as follows:

8. (amended) The apparatus for preparing soil according to claim 4 wherein said second means includes a third wheel with there being means mounting the third wheel to the frame so

that the third wheel traces a path in rotation bounded by a plane that [coincides with] intersects the first means [in the line of the travel direction for the frame].

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[Please amend claim 9 as follows:]

9. (amended) The apparatus for preparing soil according to claim 8 wherein the second and third wheels comprise toothed wheels and the means mounting the second and third wheels to the frame [mount] each mounts the second and third wheels for rotation about axes that are transverse both to each other and the rotational axis of the first wheel.

Please amend claim 16 as follows:

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16. (amended) An apparatus for preparing soil for the placement therein of at least one of seed and fertilizer, said apparatus comprising:

a frame having a front and rear;

first means on the frame for continuously parting [the] soil in an intended line of introduction of at least one of seed and fertilizer as the apparatus moves in a travel direction;
and

Q4
second means on the frame for loosening soil adjacent to the intended line of introduction of at least one of seed and fertilizer,

whereby a loosened bed of soil can be defined for receipt of at least one of seed and fertilizer,

said first means comprising a first wheel that is rotatable about a first axis that is substantially perpendicular to the intended line of introduction of at least one of seed and fertilizer.

said second means comprising a toothed wheel that overlaps the first wheel in a fore and aft direction and resides entirely rearwardly of the first axis.

[Please amend claim 17 as follows:]

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Cont. 19. (amended) The apparatus for preparing soil according to claim ¹⁵~~16~~ in combination with [fourth] third means on the frame for continuously defining an open slot in soil loosened by the second means for receipt of at least one of seed and fertilizer as the frame advances in a travel direction.

[Please amend claim 18 as follows:]

18. The apparatus for preparing soil according to claim ¹⁶~~17~~ wherein [the first means comprises a first wheel with there being means for mounting the first wheel to the frame for rotation about an axis that is substantially perpendicular to the travel direction,] the second means comprises second and third wheels with there being means for mounting the second and third wheels to the frame for rotation about axes that are non-parallel to each other and non-parallel to the rotational axis of the first wheel, said wheels each having a peripheral edge that is in close proximity to the first wheel to thereby strip soil clods adhering to the first wheel.

Claim 19, line 2 delete "fifth" and insert --fourth-- therefor.

Claim 20, line 2 delete "sixth" and insert --fifth-- therefor.

Please amend claim 21 as follows:

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21. (amended) An apparatus for preparing soil for the placement thereon of at least one of seed and fertilizer, said apparatus comprising:

a frame;

first and second cooperating toothed wheels;

means for mounting the first and second toothed wheels to the frame so that the first and second toothed wheels rotate in first and second vertically extending planes about first and second [transverse] axes that are transverse to each other to loosen soil;

means for supporting the frame at a predetermined height relative to subjacent soil supporting the frame; and

means on the frame for continuously defining an open slot in soil loosened by the first and second wheels as the frame is advanced in a travel direction,

Q5
Cont said frame supporting means maintaining the frame at a height so that the slot defining means defines a slot having a first depth,

at least one of the first and second wheels penetrating soil to a depth at least equal to [approximately] said first depth.

N/E → Claim 23, line 3 after "opening" delete "both upwardly and".

~~Please cancel claim 25.~~

Please add new claims 26 and 27 as follows:

Q6 --26. The apparatus for preparing soil according to claim 5 wherein the third means comprises means for selectively varying the height of the second wheel relative to the first wheel.

27. The apparatus for preparing soil according to claim 5 wherein the first means includes means for selectively varying the height of the first wheel relative to both the frame and the second wheel.--